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Provisional summary record of the 3rd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 30 January 2003, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Rosenthal ..... (Guatemala)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters (E/2003/1, E/2003/2, E/2003/3, E/2003/8, E/2003/L.1)

1. **Mr. de Barros** (Secretary of the Council) said that in the light of comments and changes made by delegations at the previous meeting, the Secretariat would issue a revised version of the proposed basic programme of work of the Council for 2003 and 2004 (E/2003/1).

Ad hoc advisory group on African countries emerging from conflict

Report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau (E/2003/8)

2. **Mr. Kumalo** (Chairman of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau) said that at the meeting held recently in New York as a follow-up to the publication of the report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group, the Minister of Finance and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guinea-Bissau had welcomed the report and stressed their Government's commitment to working with the Council to implement its recommendations. In preparing its report, the Group had enjoyed the full support of the President of Guinea-Bissau and had been urged to consult the people and make a frank assessment of the situation. The report stressed the need for partnership between the national authorities, donors and the Bretton Woods institutions; accordingly, a meeting had been held on 28 January 2003 with donors and the Bretton Woods institutions in order to exchange views on measures to assist the people of Guinea-Bissau, followed by a meeting with a delegation from the Government.

3. The Government of Guinea-Bissau, while recognizing the important role it must play, hoped for international support in organizing the parliamentary elections of April 2003. Much work had already been done by the United Nations representatives on the ground, the Resident Coordinator for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the representative of the Secretary-General. Although progress had been made towards establishing mechanisms for the elections, guidance and feedback from the Council concerning future actions, including support for the elections, endorsement of the report, assistance and a draft resolution on the situation in Guinea-Bissau, would be welcome.

4. **Mr. Bennouna** (Observer for Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, welcomed the timely submission of the report of the Advisory Group. The conflict in that country had had a disastrous effect on its development and there was an urgent need for international financial and economic assistance to avoid a return to conflict.

5. The report was an important one because it was the first report of the first such ad hoc group. It must therefore be seen to be beneficial for Guinea-Bissau and for United Nations efforts in the areas of peace consolidation and national reconstruction. Success would encourage other African countries emerging from conflict to request the establishment of such a group. The Council must send a strong message to the international community on the need to provide assistance to Guinea-Bissau and thereby contribute to stability in the region as a whole. He therefore welcomed the recommendations contained in the report and supported their implementation.

6. The Group of 77 and China subscribed to the concept of partnership, which implied that both the national authorities and donors had obligations; however, in order to create an appropriate enabling environment, the national authorities required international assistance for social and economic development programmes which would support implementation of economic and political objectives. The Advisory Group, the United Nations system, the Bretton Woods institutions and donor countries must mobilize resources and expertise to develop the social and economic sectors, starting with encouragement of foreign investment.

7. Within the United Nations system, UNDP should establish a new assistance programme for Guinea-Bissau in consultation with donors and international financial institutions, which should be multisectoral and oriented towards basic infrastructure and the reinforcement of institutional capacities. At the social level, the programme should focus on employment, reintegration of former combatants and poverty reduction in order to gain the confidence of the population and encourage all sectors of society to participate in reconstruction.

8. The short-term recommendations of the Advisory Group relating to support for the elections in April

2003 should be implemented, as the climate of confidence which would be created by a return to the rule of law would encourage international investment. The elections would contribute to national reconciliation and confidence-building between the Government and its partners and should be as transparent as possible. International financial assistance must also be provided in order to support government institutions and prepare for the elections. He therefore expressed support for the establishment of a special fund to respond to the immediate and short-term needs of Guinea-Bissau and reiterated the rejection by the Group of 77 and China of any conditionality relating to such assistance. Aid should be provided on the basis of neutrality and impartiality and should respond to the specific needs of the country without calling into question the country's economic and political choices.

9. He cautioned that the report and its recommendations related only to the circumstances and situation in Guinea-Bissau and should have no implications of systemic nature. Each African country emerging from conflict had its own specific needs and the Council should proceed in a case-by-case manner, bearing in mind that the priority must always be the re-establishment of peace, national reconciliation and regional stability. He urged the Council to adopt the recommendations presented in the report, thus sending a message of solidarity to an entire people which was yearning for peace and stability. The Group of 77 and China reiterated their solidarity with Guinea-Bissau and their commitment to work for peace and stability, reconstruction and social and economic development.

10. **Mr. Vassilakis** (Greece), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the acceding countries Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia and in addition the associated countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, said that African countries emerging from conflict situations should be among the highest priorities of the United Nations system. The establishment by the Council of a framework for advisory group(s) on African countries emerging from conflict provided an important mechanism to address the multiple needs of those countries. The General Assembly and the Security Council had both recognized the interactive relationship between security and development and the importance of achieving sustainable development in the countries concerned. He therefore welcomed the continued involvement of the international financial institutions in those processes because they had an essential role to play in peace-building and in supporting efforts for long-term growth and development.

11. Recalling the Council's role in increasing awareness of the particular challenges faced by countries emerging from conflict, he said that the European Union had supported the establishment of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau as a useful mechanism for dealing with that country's needs. The Group also met the need of the international community to find instruments for providing assistance to countries which no longer needed peacekeeping support but which were not ready to receive regular donor assistance and the requirements linked thereto.

12. He expressed appreciation for the comprehensive report and welcomed the fact that it contained both long-term and short-term recommendations. The European Union supported a genuine partnership between the Government of Guinea-Bissau and the international community based on common objectives and a long-term development strategy. It was therefore critical that the elections of April 2003 should be free and fair. The elections would help to restore donor confidence and thus deserved the support of the international community. They would also affect implementation of the report and the mandate of the Advisory Group should therefore be extended until July in order to allow it to follow up its examination of the humanitarian and economic situation.

13. Guinea-Bissau was at an important crossroad; there were political challenges to be dealt with and subregional circumstances to be taken into account. The international community and the United Nations system in particular must provide assistance to Guinea-Bissau and promote a cooperative response to an exceptional situation. The efforts of the international community must likewise be matched by clear and tangible commitments on the part of Guinea-Bissau concerning good governance and the rule of law.

14. **Ms. Zubčević** (Observer for Croatia) stressed the need to go beyond peacekeeping measures, to consolidate peace in post-conflict situations and to promote political reform, socio-economic development, human rights and the creation of sustainable institutions and processes. Most post-conflict countries had no tradition of the rule of law or

viable institutions, which were important criteria for donors; they were caught in a vicious circle where lack of resources prevented development and led to renewed conflict. The Council must therefore strengthen its role in peace-building by promoting sustainable peace and development. In return for international assistance the Governments concerned must promote democracy, the rule of law and institution-building and meet the needs of the population, including women and minorities.

15. Her delegation had supported the establishment of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau. She noted that Guinea-Bissau had already received post-conflict assistance three years earlier and had benefited from the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. There was a risk, however, that the country was slowly sliding back into conflict. The report of the Advisory Group put forward innovative solutions on ways to assist the country and to ensure international development assistance was used wisely. It was therefore urgent that the Council should act promptly in considering the report and its recommendations. Free and fair elections must be supported and the Council should also act quickly to approve a resolution on the situation in Guinea-Bissau.

16. The Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau would serve as a model for the peace-building efforts of the Council and the Organization. She therefore called for increased coordination with the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Security Council on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa and for increased inter-agency support for peace-building efforts.

17. **Mr. Mizukami** (Japan) stressed the need for a comprehensive approach to the prevention and resolution of conflicts. His Government had always been active in post-conflict situations, for example in Cambodia, Kosovo and Mozambique, among others, and in providing humanitarian assistance. That experience had highlighted the need to provide development assistance at all stages of the post-conflict process and his Government would continue to provide official development assistance to humanitarian and development programmes as part of its commitment to peace-building.

18. He welcomed the very comprehensive report of the Advisory Group and commended its efforts to consult all parties. He noted the involvement and commitment of United Nations representatives on the ground as well as of the Bretton Woods institutions and other actors and stressed the importance of cooperative efforts to implement the recommendations of the report. Better coordination would lead to better use of resources. The Advisory Group had worked quickly and thoroughly and its report contained valid short-term and long-term recommendations. The Government of Guinea-Bissau must now respond to the wishes of the international community and convince it of its commitment to implementing those recommendations.

19. **Mr. Isakov** (Russian Federation) said that the report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group (E/2003/8) presented an objective assessment of the complex economic and social situation in Guinea-Bissau. He shared other delegations' concerns regarding, inter alia, the continuing political instability in the country, the non-promulgation of its Constitution and the failure to elect the President and Vice-President of the Supreme Court. In view of the forthcoming parliamentary elections, those issues needed urgent attention.

20. He was also concerned about the ongoing social tensions within Guinea-Bissau, which were due to high levels of unemployment, delays in the payment of salaries, the threat of famine and the economic decline owing to decreased foreign investment. The international community must provide financial and technical assistance in order to strengthen the still fragile democracy and to prevent further conflict.

21. The Advisory Group's approach was promising, and the recommendations contained in its report were useful as they addressed both the short and the long-term needs of Guinea-Bissau. He welcomed the emphasis on a partnership between the national Government and the international community, but stressed that the Government must take a leading role within that partnership. He noted, however, that some recommendations required further clarification, particularly with regard to the respective roles of the Government of Guinea-Bissau, the Bretton Woods institutions, the United Nations system and other partners.

22. His delegation was of the opinion that the Advisory Group should pursue its contacts with the relevant stakeholders in order to take additional practical steps to assist Guinea-Bissau. In that connection, the Russian Federation supported the proposal to prolong the mandate of the Group and increase its membership.

23. In conclusion, he said that the report was particularly significant because it dealt with the question of the creation of special mechanisms to assist countries emerging from conflict which were not able to attract investment through the traditional channels. The Advisory Group was a useful instrument in the area of conflict prevention and peace-building and provided the opportunity to increase interaction between the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council.

24. **Mr. Roshdy** (Egypt) said that the report of the Advisory Group reflected a deep understanding of the problems facing Guinea-Bissau and other countries in similar situations. However, he stressed that the situation in Guinea-Bissau was so fragile that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had estimated that a minimum of US$ 12 million to 15 million were needed to enable the State to function, and in that context, it was not appropriate to impose conditionalities on Guinea-Bissau. Humanitarian aid should be provided in accordance with the principles of neutrality and impartiality, and the report should not be used as a pretext to reshape the country's economic and social situation.

25. His delegation wished to adopt the recommendations contained in the report, but would appreciate clarification on a number of issues: with reference to paragraph 55 (e), he pointed out that human rights did not fall within the mandate of all United Nations agencies. He understood from paragraph 44 that one of Guinea-Bissau's main sources of income was fisheries but, with reference to paragraph 55 (g), he cautioned against placing the country's resources under regional supervision.

26. **Mr. Hussein** (Ethiopia) associated himself with the statement made by the Observer for Morocco on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and commended the Advisory Group on its report. Although he supported all the recommendations made in the report, he considered that the immediate implementation of the short-term recommendations was essential in order to consolidate stability and lay the foundations for longer-term development in all areas. He recalled that the Secretary-General had stressed the need for budgetary support if the fragile stability in Guinea-Bissau was to be consolidated.

27. He agreed with the conclusion contained in paragraph 56 of the report, namely that an integrated subregional approach should be taken in addressing the problems of Guinea-Bissau, but stressed that the successful implementation of the recommendations of the Advisory Group depended on the full commitment of the Government.

28. **Ms. Gustafson** (United States of America) said that all concerned wanted to see Guinea-Bissau overcome its difficulties. However, her delegation could not support all the recommendations contained in the report. There was certainly a need for flexibility on the part of the Bretton Woods institutions, but the Government of Guinea-Bissau must take political and economic measures at the national level to enhance donor confidence. Improving the Government's performance would have a positive effect on donor flexibility. She regretted that her Government was unable to endorse the report at that stage, but looked forward to receiving a firm commitment from all parties to achieving peace and stability in Guinea-Bissau.

29. **Mr. Cissé** (Senegal) associated himself with the statement made by the Observer for Morocco on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. In view of his country's special relationship with Guinea-Bissau, he welcomed the Organization's willingness to provide assistance to that country. However, it was caught up in a vicious circle: without support from the international community, it would be unable to introduce the reforms imposed by donors as a condition of aid. The Council had a vital role to play in that regard, and must urgently adopt a resolution on the issue and launch a clear political appeal to highlight the gravity of the situation and the need for immediate action. He stressed that a country which was facing three simultaneous transitions would find it extremely difficult to single-handedly implement the reforms necessary to regain economic, political and social stability.

30. IMF also had an important role to play, and should recommence debt relief assistance to Guinea-Bissau. The Council should help IMF to adopt a more flexible approach, since cooperation on the part of the Bretton Woods institutions would encourage other donors to intervene.

31. **Ms. dos Santos Jaló** (Observer for Guinea-Bissau) said that it was reassuring to see that her country could count on the support of the Member States of the United Nations. Guinea-Bissau was a

small State with a great history which had successfully come through a war of liberation. However, following the most recent internal conflict, external help had not been forthcoming and, consequently, the country's economic and political life was in ruins. Given the desperate situation her Government had no choice but to fully accept the recommendations of the Advisory Group, but in that connection she recalled the importance of the principle of State sovereignty.

32. The previous two elections in Guinea-Bissau had been perceived as fair and she felt that the country's future could be secured by a successful outcome in the forthcoming elections. Parliament had already been dissolved in preparation for those elections; consequently, the promulgation of the Constitution and the introduction of reforms could not take place until they had been completed.

33. She assured the Council that Guinea-Bissau was committed to doing everything necessary to achieve the desired results.

34. **Mr. Kumalo** (Chairman of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau) welcomed the Council's initiation of a discussion about the ways in which the international community could rethink its mechanisms to assist countries emerging from conflict. The United Nations had established extremely effective mechanisms in the areas of peacekeeping and developing countries, but there was a gap in the system when it came to assisting "in-between" countries.

35. He stressed that Guinea-Bissau was not in a position to sustain any conditionalities, but reiterated that no one had actually suggested such a course of action. There was a need for simultaneous action on the part of the Government and the donors, but the Government had to take certain steps in order to earn donor confidence.

36. The United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions were providing significant support to Guinea-Bissau; the World Bank was now releasing funds which had been frozen during the conflict, and IMF was in the process of sending teams into the field. Furthermore, UNDP had sent the officials responsible for orchestrating Afghanistan's post-conflict recovery into Guinea-Bissau.

37. The Government of Guinea-Bissau had asked the Organization to assist it in holding elections to establish a solid parliamentary framework for addressing its difficulties. He believed that the endorsement of the Advisory Group's report by the ministers of Guinea-Bissau was a clear sign that they understood what had to be done to turn the situation around.

38. He understood the reservations expressed by a number of delegations, including the delegation of the United States, but was pleased to see that there was general support for the planned elections. He urged Member States to think about the plight of the people of Guinea-Bissau and reiterated that the Government had declared itself willing to play by the rules laid down by the Organization. Lastly, he called for increased cooperation at both the international and the regional levels.

General parameters for the 2003 spring meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization

39. **The President** said that, in connection with the general parameters for the 2003 spring meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO), a revised memorandum had been circulated to members of the Council; he wondered whether delegations had any additional comments thereon.

40. **Mr. Benmellouk** (Observer for Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that he shared the President's approach with respect to the parameters for the spring meeting. That approach would permit fruitful discussions on the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus as a whole. He proposed that the theme of the spring meeting should be "increased coherence, coordination and cooperation for implementation of the Monterrey Consensus at all levels". The Group of 77 and China supported the idea contained in paragraph 11 on a procedural note prepared by the Secretariat, which would provide some background information on the spring meeting.

41. The Group of 77 and China understood that there would be two meetings of the private sector and civil society. The Group of 77 and China supported the President's approach concerning the organization of a plenary meeting and four round tables. In that regard, it would be better to have one single subject for all the round tables. The Council might authorize the Bureau to begin holding consultations with representatives of

the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO. The Bureau could then come back to the Council to see whether it would be a good idea to establish a contact group or perhaps expand the Bureau to other members of the Council.

42. **Ms. Fragoulopoulou** (Greece), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the memorandum was a good basis for the 2003 spring meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO. The European Union agreed that the issues of coherence, coordination and cooperation should be the centrepiece of the discussions and reiterated its view that the dialogue, which should concern operational and implementation issues, should focus on mainstreaming the Consensus into all levels, especially country-level actions. The European Union supported the theme proposed by the President for the meeting as well as the format and the hearings involving the NGO community and the business sector and looked forward to the consultations of the Bureau with the intergovernmental bodies of the Bank, IMF and WTO and to the brief note to be prepared by the Secretariat on ways of shaping a focused dialogue. Following consultations between the European Union and Morocco, it had been agreed to amend the proposal by the Group of 77 and China by inserting the words "a year after Monterrey" after the words "all levels".

43. **Mr. Fahmy** (Egypt) sought clarification on the interaction of the Bureau with the boards of the Bank, IMF and WTO.

44. **The President** said that the Bureau was beginning a dialogue with the Council's partners by presenting a common viewpoint. It would hold consultations at the management level of the World Bank, IMF and WTO. Once it had their reactions, it would come back to the Council with a more complete proposal. The Council would then decide whether subsequent consultations should be held with the intergovernmental bodies of those three institutions.

45. **Ms. Serwer** (United States of America) said that her delegation found the parameters proposed by the Bureau acceptable. In her view, the purpose of the April meeting was to allow all parties to discuss what the United Nations and other stakeholders were doing to support financing for development. Her delegation would like more time to review the Group of 77's proposal for a theme.

46. **Mr. Fahmy** (Egypt), noting that paragraph 69 (a) of the Monterrey Consensus clearly mentioned interactions between representatives of the Economic and Social Council and the directors of the executive boards of the Bank and IMF, as well as representatives of the appropriate intergovernmental body of WTO, wondered whether the approach proposed by the President of limiting such interactions to the management level would not be contrary to that paragraph.

47. **The President** said it was his understanding that the discussion would go to the intergovernmental bodies once the Council had an agreed document. The only unresolved issue was who would represent the Council in those discussions. It was felt that, at some point, all the parties involved — the Economic and Social Council as well as its partners from the intergovernmental machinery — should have the same understanding of the issue. Once the Bureau was sure that such was the case, it would come back to the Council. He suggested that the Council should take note of the memorandum.

48. *It was so decided.*

Operational activities segment

49. **The President** said that, on the basis of comments made by the representative of Greece and the Observer for Morocco on the way in which the operational activities segment should be described, and pursuant to draft decision IV contained in document E/2003/L.1, the Bureau proposed the following formulation:

> "With regard to the operational activities segment of the Council, the Council, during its operational activities segment, will review progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 56/201 on the triennial policy review of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system. In particular, the Council will consider 'the conclusions reached at the present triennial policy review on resources for operational activities for development, reviewing the progress made on the issue of funding of development cooperation activities of the United Nations system' (paragraph 27 of General Assembly resolution 56/201) and the report of the Secretary-General requested in paragraph 56 of the same resolution on 'an impartial and

independent assessment of the extent to which the United Nations funds, programmes and agencies at the field level learn lessons from their evaluations and to formulate proposals on how to improve the feedback mechanisms at the field level'".

He wondered whether the Council found that formulation acceptable.

50. **Mr. Benmellouk** (Observer for Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that since the Group of 77 and China would be holding consultations immediately following the meeting in order to determine a position on the matter, a decision should be postponed. Moreover, the President should have the proposal circulated in writing in order to permit the Group of 77 and China to make a well-informed decision.

51. **The President** said that the text would be circulated so that it could be considered at the Council's next formal meeting.

Commission on Human Rights request for additional meetings

52. **The President** said that the Secretariat was in consultation with the secretariat of the Commission and the President was also in consultation with the Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights to determine whether the Commission's programme of work could be settled without need of a further decision from the Council. For the moment, no decision was required.

Enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

53. **The President**, referring to the enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, said the interested delegation had indicated that it would submit a draft proposal for consideration and action by the Council at a later stage.

Economic and Social Council Millennium Award for Good Practices

54. **Mr. Khan** (Director, Division for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, Department of Economic and Social Affairs), introducing the proposal, said that it was meant to strengthen the Council's capacity to undertake, with the help of other stakeholders, including Governments, civil society and the private sector, activities which could lead to implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations international conferences and summits. The idea was to see if, with the help of United Nations agencies and resident coordinators, excellent ideas for projects and good practices could be selected and awarded. The idea could be carried out as an experiment during the current year in the area of rural development, the theme that the Council had decided to take up. Agencies working in the area of rural development, including the International Fund for Agricultural Development, had been consulted and had expressed a willingness to cooperate. Nominal funding would be needed. If the Council agreed in principle, a proposal could be developed further.

55. **Mr. Benmellouk** (Observer for Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, requested more time to study the memorandum.

56. **Ms. Serwer** (United States of America) asked whether funding would come from voluntary resources.

57. **The President** said that funding would come from voluntary resources and that the proposal had no financial implications. He took it that the Council wished to postpone a decision on the matter.

58. *It was so decided.*

International Narcotics Control Board

59. **The President** said that he had received a letter from the Chairman of the International Narcotics Control Board asking the Council to seek the opinion of the Legal Counsel on the difference between "honoraria" and "remuneration". If he heard no objections, he would write a letter to the Office of the Legal Counsel requesting the Legal Counsel to provide guidance in the matter.

60. *It was so decided.*

Elections in connection with the Programme Coordination Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

61. **The President** invited the Council to turn its attention to a vacancy on the Programme Coordination Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). He had been advised that

Sweden would relinquish its seat on the Board and that the Group of Western European and Other States had put forward the candidature of Switzerland to complete Sweden's term of office.

62. **Mr. Chave** (Observer for Switzerland) explained that the Group of Western European and Other States was organized into a number of constituencies and that Austria, Switzerland and Sweden constituted one of those constituencies. A rotation plan had been agreed under that constituency for participation on the Board. His delegation was seeking the Council's consent to that rotation, which was a purely technical matter that would not jeopardize the acquired rights of other members of the Programme Coordination Board of UNAIDS.

63. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to elect Switzerland to the Board for a term beginning that day and expiring on 31 December 2003.

64. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.